
An Action Plan for Wellesley Hills Square

Project Overview

- Purpose
 - Develop an action plan to achieve the Vision for Wellesley Hills Square
- Process
 - 2 initial Steering Committee meetings
 - Public Forum on May 2, 2001
 - Steering Committee meeting to discuss final recommendations
 - Final report will be completed in June

The Vision for Wellesley Hills Square

Excerpts from the Phase I Report

“In 2015, Wellesley Hills Square is a **thriving commercial village** serving the surrounding neighborhood, daytime business owners and employees, and members of the wider community.”

- “Its **village character** is reflected in the small and medium scale architecture of its 19th and 20th century buildings located at the sidewalk edge, and in the many small independent storefront businesses.”
- “Its **distinctiveness** is expressed in the use of stonework throughout the district, attractive entryway signage, and careful maintenance of its landmark park and clock tower. In good weather, Elm Park attracts users throughout the day, including a lunchtime crowd enjoying the chance to be outside and surrounded by greenery.”

The Vision for Wellesley Hills Square

Excerpts from the Phase I Report

- “Its **cohesiveness** can be seen in the variety of thriving businesses, activity throughout the day and evening, seasonal round of plantings and other decorations, effective signage and lighting, well-maintained buildings and an active business association that takes a strong role in promoting and managing the Square.”

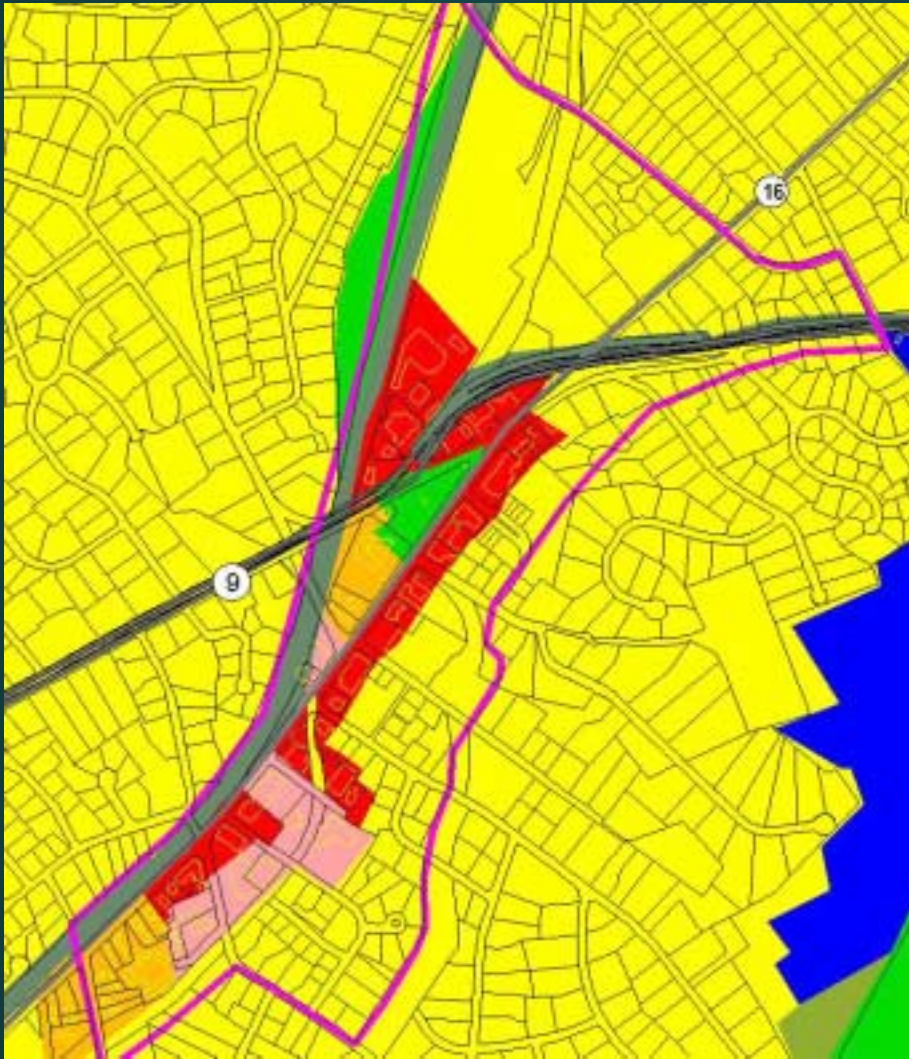
“Although Washington Street remains an important arterial road carrying substantial traffic, Wellesley Hills Square has become more **pedestrian friendly** through effective management of transportation, circulation, and parking.”

How Can We Achieve the Vision?

- Land Use and Zoning
- Village Design & Building Design
- Elm Park Improvements
- Transportation & Parking Improvements

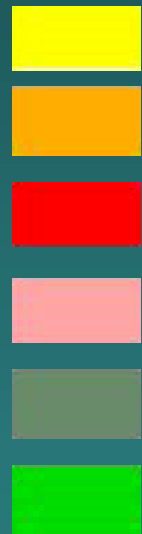
What's Allowed Now?

Land Use and Zoning



The study area contains following zoning districts:

- Single Residence
- General Residence
- Business
- Business A
- Transportation
- Conservation



What's Allowed Now?

Business District Zoning

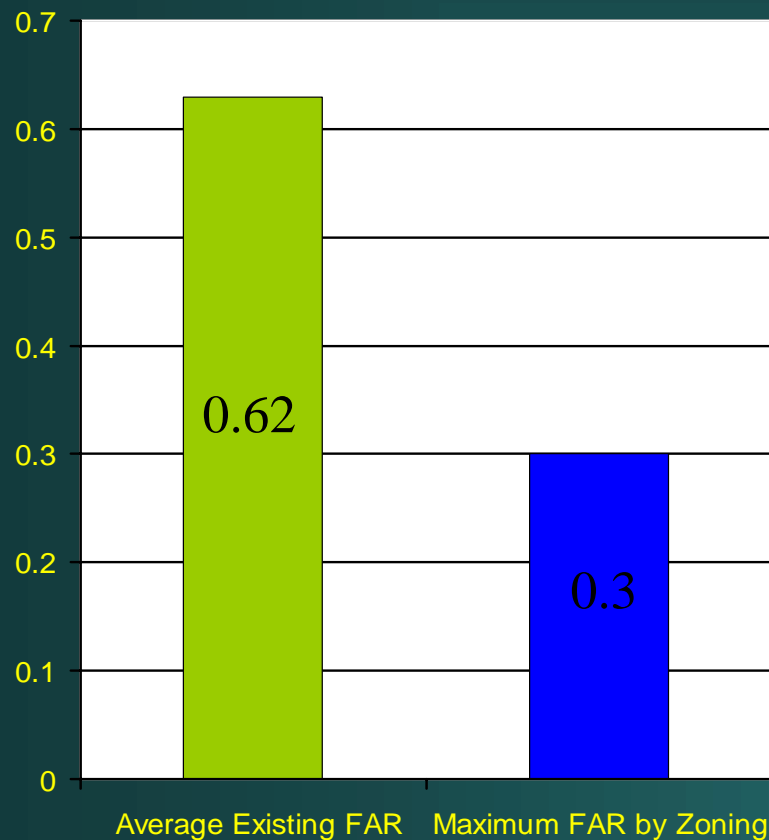
Allowed Uses

- Retail stores up to 50,000 s.f.
- Theaters, hotels, restaurants
- Office buildings, medical facilities, storage, parking
- Light manufacturing
- Residences, institutions
- Additional uses by special permit

What Could Happen in the Future?

Business District "Buildout"

Floor Area Ratio Comparison



FAR (Floor-Area Ratio) =
Building Size ÷ Lot Size

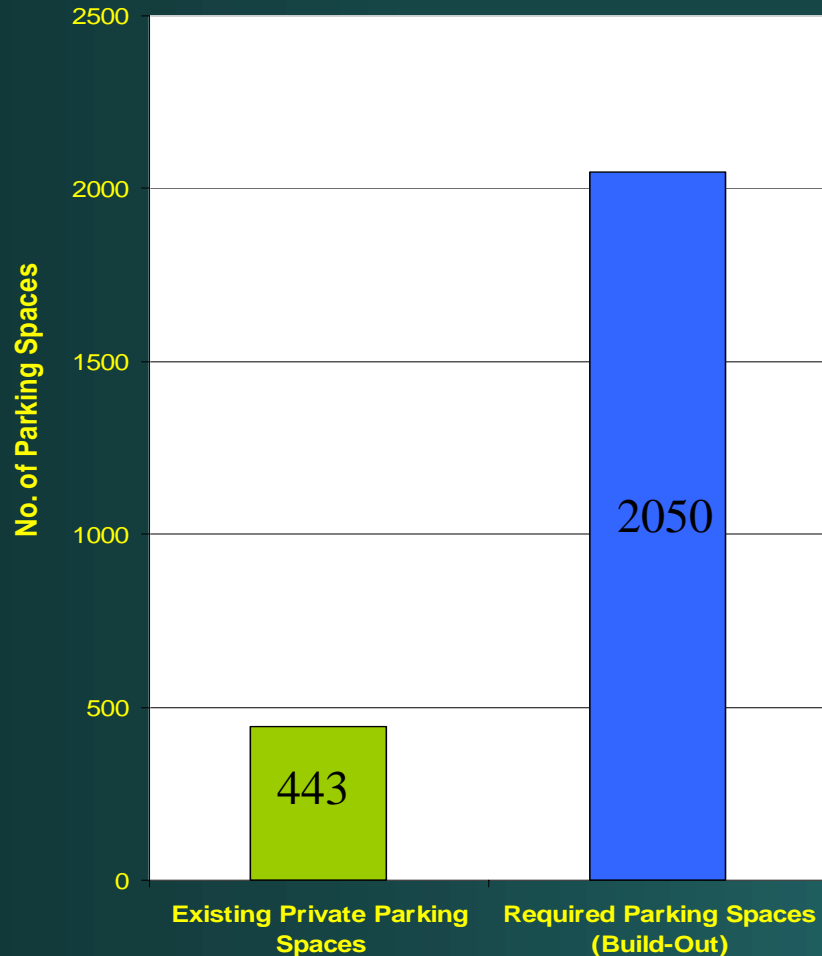
Current FAR = 0.62

Allowed FAR = 0.3

What Could Happen in the Future?

Parking in the Business District

Parking Space Comparison



Off-Street Parking Requirement for Commercial Buildings:

- 1 space/150 sf. of building footprint or
- 3.2 space/1000 sf. of building floor area

What the Zoning Means: An Example Existing Conditions

Daylor
Consulting
Group,
Inc.

At the corner of Forest Street and Washington Street

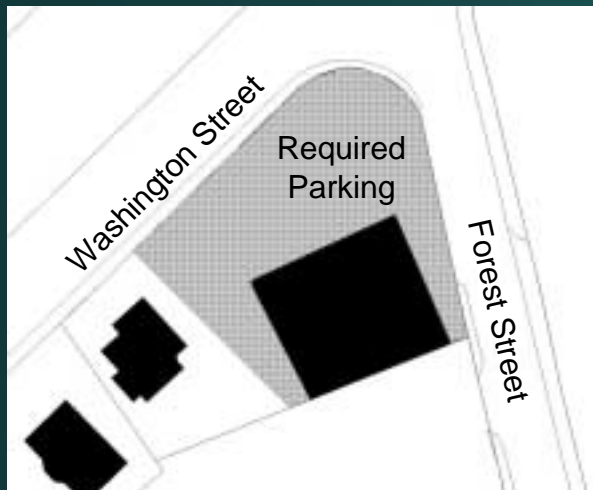


What the Zoning Means: An Example

Maximum Buildout Allowed by Zoning

Daylor
Consulting
Group,
Inc.

At the corner of Forest Street and Washington Street



Some Alternatives

Land Use and Zoning

Designate the area as the Wellesley Hills Square Commercial Village District:

- Increase the allowed FAR
- Encourage mixed use development
- Reduce maximum allowed retail store space
- Specify maximum and minimum setbacks from the sidewalk. Continue to allow zero setback at the side of commercial development
- Reduce the parking requirement for commercial developments, and allow flexibility

Village & Streetscape Design



Existing Streetscape

- New sidewalks and street furniture
- Parking at the back side of developments is visible
- Storefronts and signs are eclectic
- No “gateway” identity

Building Design



What's There Now, and What's Allowed?

- 1 to 3 story small and medium scale buildings with brick façades
- Long blank walls and blinded windows in some buildings
- Design Review Guidelines are too generic for this area
- Current zoning allows large retail stores in the area

Some Alternatives

Village Design



- Wellesley Hills Square identity and “gateway” signs
- Incentives and flexibility for developments that provide public amenities
- Strictly enforce screening requirements for parking areas

Some Alternatives

Building Design

- Prepare illustrated design guidelines for the area
 - Require awnings on the first floors of buildings
 - More consistency of signage
 - Designate buildings or facades worth preserving or replicating
 - Restrict the length of blank walls or blinded windows
 - Preferred building elements (roof, window, material, color)

Elm Park



Existing Conditions:

- Clock tower functions as a landmark for the area
- Underutilized; little programming
- Bus shelter no longer used
- Affected by Rt. 9 & 16 traffic

Alternatives for Elm Park



Alternative I:

- Remove the bus shelter
- Add fountain & pool at the gateway
- Buffer Rt. 9 with evergreen plants
- Open lawn area for creative play and picnics
- Pedestrian plaza with seating coves
- Light the clock tower

Alternatives for Elm Park



Please select a break-out group:

Alternative II:

- Pedestrian plaza with fountains to mitigate traffic noise
- More paved area to accommodate community events
- Pedestrian promenade